

Outline of Hosea

It is our hope that this outline of Hosea will assist you in your study of God's holy Word — His letter to you.

Philo states that the name "Hosea" means "what sort of a person is this?" Others say that the name means "salvation." We know very little about Hosea. Some of the early Jewish writers believed that Hosea was the son of a prophet. If so, it is likely that Hosea's father knew Elisha. Hosea began to prophesy against Israel (the northern kingdom) at a time when the country was experiencing unprecedented prosperity but was far from God. By the end of his prophecy, Israel's power and prosperity were greatly diminished and by 722 B.C., Israel was no more.

It appears that Hosea may have moved from Israel to Judah sometime around 735 B.C., as he speaks more from a distance in the later part of the book. He prays that Judah might remain separated from Gilgal (4:15).

Hosea was commanded to marry an adulterer, to signify God's relationship with Israel. The first 3 chapters revolve around this relationship and its significance.

The book demonstrates the grief of God and His continuing love for a rebellious people. The book begins with grief and ends with hope.

Date: 755-722 B.C.

Dates of kings reigning during Hosea's Time of Prophecy

- Uzziah 790-739
- Jotham 750-732
- Ahaz 744-715
- Hezekiah 729-686
- Jeroboam 793-753 (He began prophesying before 753 and ended after 729. Because there is no hint that Israel has fallen, he most likely did not prophesy after 722 B.C.)

Historical background:

Elijah the prophet prophesied from around 870 B.C. to 849 B.C. From 849 B.C. until around 797 B.C., Elisha prophesied. Jonah is the first of the recorded prophets after Elisha, prophesying from around 775 to 760 B.C. Amos also prophesied around 760 B.C. After Amos came Hosea who overlaps with Isaiah and Micah.

At the time Hosea began to prophesy, Israel was at its peak of power. Israel was the most powerful nation in the Eastern Mediterranean. Israel had subdued Syria (secular history records no known ruler of Syria from 773 B.C. to 750 B.C.) and had pushed the boundaries of Israel almost to where they were in the time of Solomon. Israel was wealthy and was experiencing unprecedented prosperity. Within 40 years, Israel would be no more.

In the book of Hosea, there are many marvelous passages and lucid sayings. For instance:

- I will allure her. *2:14*
- I will betroth you to Me forever. *2:19*

- “You, My people” and they shall say “my God.” 2:23
- The more they increased, the more they sinned against Me” 4:7
- . . . like people, like priest. 4:9
- I will return again to My place till they acknowledge their offense and they will seek My face. 5:15
- Come, and let us return to the LORD; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up that we may live in His sight. Let us know, let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, like the later and former rain to the earth.6:1-3
- For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. 6:6
- They make a king glad with their wickedness. 7:3
- Ephraim also is like a silly dove, without sense. 7:11
- They did not cry out to Me with their heart when they wailed upon their beds. 7:14
- My God, we know You! 8:2
- They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind. 8:7
- They shall not dwell in the LORD’s land. 9:3
- Israel knows. The prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is insane. 9:7
- Their heart is divided. 10:2
- They shall say to the mountains, “Cover us,” and to the hills, “Fall on us.” 10:8
- Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the LORD. 10:12
- You have plowed wickedness; you have reaped iniquity. 10:13
- Out of Egypt I called My son. 11:1
- I drew them with gentle cords, with bands of love . . . I stooped and fed them. 11:4
- Though they call to the Most High, none at all exalt Him. 11:7
- How can I give you up . . . My heart churns within Me. 11:8
- They shall find in me no iniquity that is sin. 12:8
- O Death, I will be your plagues, O grave, I will be your destruction. 13:1
- I will love them freely. 14:4
- The ways of the LORD are right. 14:9

The concept of sowing and reaping, found at Galatians 6:7-8 comes most likely from this book (Hosea 8:7; 10:12-13). The sacrifices of praise in Hebrews 13:15 may relate back to Hosea 14:2. Certainly, 1 Corinthians 15:54-55 quotes Hosea 13:14.

Outline

I. Married to an Adulterer 1-3

A. The Marriage and the three children 1

1. Jezreel (God will sow) — the kingdom of Jehu is finished (752). Zechariah was slain (2 Kings 15:10). 4-5

2. Lo Ruhamah (no mercy) — God’s mercy is over. 6-8
 3. Lo Ammi (no people) — Israel is not God’s people. 9
 4. Yet — notice the hope in 10-11
- B. God’s Dealings with an Unfaithful Wife 2
1. His purpose and punishment 2-13
 2. His great restoration and mercy 14-23
- C. Hosea’s Restoration to His Wife 3

II. God’s Dealings with an Adulterous People 4-13

- A. The Complaint 4
- B. The Promised Judgment 5
- C. The Call to Repentance 6:1-4
- D. God’s Frustration 6:4-7:16
- E. Sowing the Wind, Reaping the Whirlwind 8
- F. The Expulsion 9
- G. Assyria will Destroy Israel 10
- H. God’s Historical Struggle 11-13

III. God’s Promise of Restoration 14

Key Idea:

Repent and come back to the intimate knowledge of the LORD 2:20; 4:1, 6; 5:15; 6:1-3, 6; 10:12; 13:4; 14

Key Passage: Hosea 10:12

Key Lesson: Our Sin Distresses God